Statement of Work

EP-W-11-009/ EP-W-11-010/ EP-W-11-011

RFO Number: 23

I. **Title**: Reviewing EPA's Smart Growth Program's Technical Assistance Efforts

II. Period of performance:

From: Date of issuance
To: January 27, 2013

III. Background

Technical assistance to state and local governments has been part of the EPA smart growth program since its inception in 1996. This work protects public health and the environment and helps make American communities more competitive and attractive to investment for decades to come. OSC responds to communities' demands for strategies that can help them grow in a manner that is cleaner, greener, healthier, and more prosperous. OSC provides strategic support at the regional and local level to identify ways to make development decisions more effective, to spur local innovation, and to ensure that growth protects natural and cultural resources.

Providing technical assistance to communities is the cornerstone of OSC and much of OSC's research, tool development, and community outreach efforts are reflected in its technical assistance efforts. To best respond to the needs of communities, OSC has developed a number of technical assistance programs that work with communities at all levels of technical capacity. These programs are grouped into three areas and represent the broad spectrum of OSC's technical assistance efforts.

1. *Research on difficult policy issues*: OSC selects a small number of communities to explore difficult policy issues for which policy solutions or approaches are not readily obvious. Specific technical assistance programs in this area include the Smart Growth Implementation Assistance program, the Governor's Institute on Community Design, and OSC innovative or special technical assistance. These efforts can range from work with states such as California to develop performance measures for state transportation funding to work in rural communities such as Teton County, Idaho to develop strategies to revitalize their main streets.

2. *Demonstration projects*. For many communities, an example of how a specific smart growth approach is implemented provides an opportunity to "kick the tires." To facilitate the broader implementation of some smart growth strategies, OSC works with communities to develop a demonstration program with the idea that once a community can get something built, additional projects will quickly follow. Specific OSC technical assistance efforts in this area include Greening America's Capitals and some OSC innovative or special assistance.

3. *Quick-hit technical assistance to address common barriers.* Many local governments face similar barriers to implementing smart growth approaches. In this area, EPA modifies and uses proven tools that help communities address common barriers by implementing a range of narrowly defined tools, such as parking or walking audits, complete streets policy guidance, and planning for economic and fiscal health. This type of technical assistance is more streamlined;--"quick-in, quick-out"—and examples include OSC's Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities.

While the range and scope of OSC's technical assistance may vary, EPA measures success by evaluating two outcomes: (1) the degree to which the technical assistance recipients implemented the policy and design suggestions offered, and (2) the degree to which the policy suggestions developed could be replicated in other communities.

Over time, the number of cities and towns, regional planning agencies, and state governments seeking help implementing smart growth approaches has increased dramatically. For example in the past three years, 1,775 communities have requested more than $100B in assistance from the partner agencies in the Partnership for Sustainable Communities. To date, OSC has provided technical assistance to 153 communities, which represents a total OSC investment of more than $6.5 million. The purpose of this work assignment is to evaluate the effectiveness of this investment.

IV. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this work assignment is to review the effectiveness of the technical assistance that OSC has provided since 2005. The Contractor shall: (1) develop nine in-depth case studies that evaluate the assistance across a range of environmental, economic, public health, and social indicators, (2) assess and evaluate the range of implementation activities in most of the 153 communities, (3) analyze EPA's approach to reviewing its technical assistance programs, and (4) draft a "10 years of Technical Assistance" report that contain the results of the evaluation.

V. QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA) REQUIREMENTS

Check [X] Yes if the following is required or [ ] NO if the following is not required. The Contractor shall submit with their technical proposal a written Quality Assurance Project Plan for any project that is developing environmental measurements or a Quality Assurance Supplement to the Quality Management Plan for any project which generates environmental data using models.

VI. TASKS AND DELIVERABLES

The TOPO shall review all deliverables in draft form and provide revisions and/or comments to the contractor. The contractor shall incorporate the TOPO's comments 14 days after receipt of comments. Final deliverable shall be in MS Word format.

From time to time, as new information develops, the contractor shall organize Guidance Calls with various experts for the purposes of scoping issues, confirming topics of research and methodological

approaches, and making sure tasks and the overall project are on track and focusing on relevant topics and issues. Technical direction, when appropriate, will be provided by the TOPO.

Contractor personnel shall at all times identify themselves as contractor employees and shall not present themselves as EPA employees. Furthermore, they shall not represent the views of the U.S. Government, EPA, or its employees. In addition, the contractor shall not engage in inherently governmental activities, including but not limited to actual determination of EPA policy and preparation of documents on EPA letterhead.

Task One—Develop Nine Case Studies (Contract Reference: II.A.1. Qualitative research, quantitative analysis, modeling, and database management)

The Contractor shall develop nine case studies on communities for which EPA has provided assistance. Each case study shall be between 5 and 7 pages in length and include the following information:

a. Purpose of the technical assistance
b. Actions that EPA suggested
c. Actions that the community implemented subsequent to EPA technical assistance, and from those actions determine:
    1. Environmental results from their actions (modeled),
    2. Local government economic results from their actions (estimated), which could include increased property values, decreased public expenditures, greater efficiency in public service/action, and/or number of jobs created,
    3. Public health results from their actions (estimated and modeled), and
    4. Other social benefits, such as assistance to disadvantaged populations, and/or increased public participation.

In addition, the contractor shall provide information or analysis, to the extent possible, for each of the following evaluation criteria:

- Did the recipient of the assistance implement any of the suggestions? [EPA will provide a copy of the report that detailed possible suggested activities the community could implement.]
- Did the technical assistance support a disadvantaged or underrepresented community?
- Measuring outcomes from the TA:
    - Were brownfield sites identified for redevelopment/remediation/site prep for redevelopment? Any in disadvantaged neighborhoods?
    - Was green space increased? Or were plans developed to increase green space (including green infrastructure)?
    - Did it lead to increased lane miles for walking, biking, and transit areas? Were plans developed that increase miles?
    - Did it increase the share of residential and commercial construction on infill, degraded, and/or under-utilized sites? Or were plans developed to do so ?
    - Did it lead to increases in property values or tax revenues? Or were plans created that project increases in property values or tax revenues?
    - Did the technical assistance attract additional money to a plan, idea, project, etc.?

- To the extent possible and where data is easily available, analysis will include how the EPA-provided technical assistance helped the community progress on HUD DOT EPA Partnership for Sustainable Communities flagship performance measures, including:

    - *Combined Housing + Transportation Costs as a proportion of area median income (derived from the H+T Affordability Index)*
    - (Change in the) net Acres of agricultural and natural resource land lost annually to development per new resident
    - (Change in the) percent of new housing units (or commercial space) built in previously developed areas

The first four case studies on the technical assistance recipients are described below. In all cases, the state or local government implemented some aspect of the EPA provided suggestions. The contactor shall model or otherwise analyze the environmental, economic, public health, and quality of life outcomes from the implementation of those suggestions. EPA understands that the contractor may need to make a number of assumptions and the contractor shall make transparent and document these assumptions.

- Tennesse general state stormwater permit—EPA suggested land use credits that were incorporated into state permits for stormwater. The case study shall focus on the water quality impacts of implementing the land use credits and the green infrastructure performance measure. The permit can be found at: http://www.tn.gov/environment/wpc/stormh2o/finals/tns000000_ms4_phase_ii_2010.pdf (pages 15-17)
- Fairfax County, VA - EPA provided assistance to the Fairfax County Planning Department and staff from County Executive's Office. An analysis was conducted of the emissions reduction benefits associated with amending the County Comprehensive Plan to permit the development of an additional 30,000 residential units and 19 million square feet of commercial space around 4 new Metro Rail Stations serving Tysons Corner. The case study will focus on the neighborhood and regional environmental benefits of this large scale suburban retrofit that will transform a auto-dependent suburban employment center into a walkable urban community.
- Taos, NM – EPA's team offered options to redesign a commercial strip corridor leading into town to make it more in keeping with the town's historic character, more environmentally responsible, and more pedestrian friendly. The town used the EPA report in its zoning code revision. The case study shall focus on how the revised zoning code is projected to change development patterns and travel modes, and the environmental outcomes from those changes.
- McCall, Idaho – While helping to identify appropriate locations and scales for development along a new bypass route, EPA's team provided this small mountain town (pop 3000) with planning strategies that have been used to advance a number of initiatives. Land use concept plans for several sub-areas within McCall have been tested and adopted as a part of the community's comprehensive plan and concepts discussed during the team's visit were incorporated into a re-write of the zoning and subdivision ordinances. The case study will focus on how McCall has implemented its comprehensive plan and ordinances to enhance the local economy and protect the environment.

In addition to the four technical assistance recipients described above, the contractor shall prepare five additional case studies. EPA will identify the additional five recipients and will provide to the contractor no later than September 1, 2012. In all nine cases, EPA will provide to the contractor the final material that was prepared for the community, information on smart growth implementation actions that have occurred after EPA-provided technical assistance, and the scope and focus for each case study.

The contractor shall augment the information provided by EPA through review of news articles, online searches, and interviews with community participants to develop each case study. EPA will provide the contact information for each technical assistance recipient for whom a case study will be developed, the final EPA report, and any information EPA has from that community and its progress in implementing the EPA suggestions.

Further, the contractor shall include environmental outcomes as part of each case study, e.g., the reduction in vehicle miles traveled, reduced stormwater runoff, acres of land not developed, by using sketch modeling approaches. The contractor shall use easily accessible water and air models that can accurately assess the comparative difference between different development scenarios and not models that accurately assess the total load or air emission impact. For example, Purdue University has an on line tool for assess stormwater reductions from different development scenarios. For vehicle miles traveled, carbon dioxide emissions and criteria pollutant emissions, the contractor shall use scenario planning / sketch modeling tools that would generate estimates of the emissions reductions associated with both how projects are built as well as the reductions associated with where they are built. Prior to starting the modeling, the contractor shall provide to EPA a proposed methodology for the proposed environmental modeling.

The contractor shall participate in a kick off conference call to discuss the content and scope of the first case study and shall participate in calls with EPA weekly during the preparation of the case studies. These calls will give the contractor an opportunity to ask questions and for EPA to narrow the scope of the case study as appropriate. It is anticipated that these weekly calls will last no more than 1 hour each.

The contractor shall provide EPA with the first draft of a case study two weeks from the first kick off conference call. EPA will review the case study and provide comments. The contractor shall respond to the EPA comments on the first case study and provide EPA a second draft within 7 days of receiving comments from EPA. It is expected that the second draft of the first case study will serve as the model for the remaining case studies.

The contractor shall prepare the first draft of the second through fifth case study within three weeks of EPA finalizing the first case study model. The contactor shall respond to EPA comments within 7 days of receiving comments from EPA. The contractor shall provide to EPA a second draft of this second set of case studies within 5 days of receiving comments from EPA.

The contractor shall prepare the first draft of the last set of case studies (case six through nine) within three weeks of finalizing the second set of case studies. The contactor shall respond to EPA comments within 7 days of receiving comments from EPA. The contractor shall provide to EPA a second draft of this final set of case studies within 5 days of receiving comments from EPA.

Task Two – C ursory Analysis of 153 communities (Contract Reference: II.A. 2. Development and analysis of Policy Options)

EPA's Smart Growth Program has provided technical assistance to 153 communities, and collected cursory data on most/all of those efforts. The Contractor shall prepare a 5-10 page analysis of trends, successes, and opportunities based on the information EPA has gathered from its 153 communities.

The contractor shall begin this task with a conference call with EPA. The purpose of this call is for the contractor to ask questions about the information provided and to brainstorm additional analysis or review items that could be included in the write up from this task.

As part of EPA's own review efforts, an accomplishment "pyramid" has been developed (to the extent possible) for the majority of communities assisted. The elements of the pyramid track the incremental progress of a community towards achieving the goal of improved development through a series of steps which include:

- Community-specific information has been provided in the form of technical assistance, memos, final reports, or other policy analysis deliverables.
- Community has formed a Task Force/Committee to move forward with the findings of the EPA policy analysis or technical assistance
- Community has developed specific proposals for local adoption (this could be a neighborhood or regional plan, new code language, new overlay zones)
- Community has adopted changes proposed in Level 3, or has adopted changes based on EPA community-specific information
- Changes result in new physical development that would otherwise have not taken place

This data has been collected and entered into a database. EPA will provide the contractor a copy of this database. From this data, the contractor shall review and analyze this information to determine trends, opportunities, barriers, and overall success of EPA technical assistance, including, but not limited to, the following questions:

1. What is the overall percentage of communities that have implemented some aspect of EPA delivered assistance?
2. What is the percent of communities that have implemented steps in the accomplishments pyramid?
3. What is the percentage of communities that have implemented smart growth strategies beyond those discussed in EPA's suggestions to the community?
4. What are community trends on the type of suggestion most commonly implemented?

If needed, the contractor shall augment the EPA-provided database with internet searches but cannot contact the communities directly.

The contractor shall begin this task with a conference call with EPA. The purpose of this call is for the contractor to ask questions about the information provided and to brainstorm additional analysis or review items that could be included in the write up from this task.

The contractor shall provide EPA a draft analysis within 3 weeks of the kick off conference call. EPA will provide comments to the contractor within 7 days of receiving the analysis and the contractor shall respond to these comments within 7 days of receiving comments from EPA.

Task Three – Lessons Learned Memo to EPA (Contract Reference: II.A. 2. Development and analysis of Policy Options)

After the case studies and the cursory analysis of the 153 communities have been completed, the contractor shall provide a brief 2-3 page memo to EPA that addresses the following elements:

- The effectiveness of reviewing EPA technical assistance efforts using the case study and cursory evaluation approach,
- The effectiveness of EPA's evaluation criteria, including suggestions of additional criteria or removing existing criteria.
- Any suggestions on how to improve EPA's review of technical assistance recipients, including the type and amount of information collected
- Any lessons learned from completing Tasks 1 and 2.

The contractor shall prepare the "lessons learned" memo to EPA within 10 days of completing Tasks 1 and 2.

Task Four – Draft Report: 10 years of EPA Technical Assistance
(Contract Reference: II.C. Communication and outreach)

The contractor shall begin this task with a conference call with EPA. The purpose of this call is for the contractor to ask questions about the information provided and to brainstorm additional analysis or review items that could be included in the write up from this task.

The contractor shall draft a 20-30 page document, tentatively titled "10 Years of EPA Technical Assistance" using the information prepared in this work assignment. EPA will provide the contractor with an annotated outline of the report. The purpose of the report is to tell the story of EPA's smart growth technical assistance efforts, the environmental gains communities have made because of our technical assistance and the effectiveness of EPA's investment. The report may have the following sections:

- Executive Summary
- Description of EPA technical assistance
- Summary of community implementation of EPA provided assistance, e.g., the level of success
- Highlights from 10 to 15 communities
- Lessons learned

In drafting the report, the contractor shall use information generated from this task order and other information provided by EPA. No additional research for this report will be necessary.

The contractor shall draft the report within two weeks of completing Tasks 1 and 2. EPA will provide comments on the draft report and the contractor shall respond to those comments within 7 days. The

contractor shall respond to a 2nd and final set of comments from EPA within 7 days of receiving EPA comments.

TASK	DELIVERABLE	DATE DUE (calendar days after EPA and contractor execute contract)
1	1. Proposed environmental modeling methodology 2. Draft 1st case study (model) 3. Respond to comments on 1st case study 4. Respond to additional EPA comments on 1st case study 5. Draft second set of case studies (2-5) 6. Respond to first set of EPA comments on second set of case studies 7. Respond to second set of EPA comments on second set of case studies 8. Draft final set of case studies (6-9) 9. Respond to first set of EPA comments on final set of case studies 10. Respond to second set of EPA comments on final set of case studies	1. 5 days from kick off conference call 2. 14 days from kick off conference call 3. Due 5 days after receiving EPA comments 4. Due 5 days after receiving EPA comments 5. Due 3 weeks from finalizing the model case study format 6. Due 7 days after receiving EPA comments 7. Due 5 days after receiving EPA comments 8. Due 3 weeks from finalizing 2nd case study set. 9. Due 7 days after receiving EPA comments 10. Due 5 days after receiving EPA comments
2	1. Draft Cursory Review 2. Respond to EPA comments	1. Due within 3 weeks of kick off conference call 2. Due within 7 days of receiving EPA comments
3	Lessons learned memo to EPA	Due within 10 days of completing task 1
4	1. Draft "10 years of TA" report 2. Respond to first set of EPA comments 3. Respond to second set of EPA comments	1. Due within 2 weeks of completing Tasks 1 and 2 2. Within 7 days of receiving EPA comments 3. Within 7 days of receiving EPA comments

VII. Miscellaneous

Software Application files, delivered to the Government, shall conform to the requirements relating to accessibility as detailed to the 1998 amendments to the Rehabilitation Act, particularly, but not limited to, § 1194.21 Software applications and operating systems and § 1194.22 Web-based intranet and internet information and applications. See: http://www.section508.gov/

Preferred text format: MS Word, Office 2007

Preferred presentation format: Power Point, Office 2007

Preferred portable format: Adobe Acrobat